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ABSTRACT

This brochure provides brief descriptions of 11 recent documents and journal articles selected from the ERIC database by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management (University of Oregon), all on the broad topic of teacher collegiality. The works reviewed are as follows: "A New Model for Professionalizing Teacher Evaluation," by John R. Ban and John R. Soudah (from "Peabody Journal of Education"); "Using Observation to Improve Your Teaching," by Jere E. Brophy; "Reflective Teaching as a Strategy for Teacher Growth," by Donald R. Cruickshank and Jane H. Applegate (from "Educational Leadership"); "The Collegial Evaluation Program: A Manual for the Professional Development of Teachers (Field Test Edition)," by Sanford M. Dornbusch and others; "Peer Observation: A Means for Supervisory Acceptance," by Elmer C. Ellis and others (from "Educational Leadership"); "It Takes One to Know One--Advocating Colleagues as Evaluators," by Donald R. Grossnickle and Thomas W. Cutter (from "NASSP Bulletin"); "Looking for Good Teaching: A Guide to Peer Observation," by Barbara B. Helling; "Collegial Support: An Alternative to Principal-Led Supervision of Instruction," by Jerrold D. Hopfengardner and Ronald Walker (from "NASSP Bulletin"); "Peer Observation Improves Teacher Performance," by Christopher Lempesis (from "NASSP Bulletin"); "Peer Clinical Supervision: Theory vs. Reality," by Shirley A. McFaul and James M. Cooper, reviewed along with two responses by Lee F. Goldsberry and Robert J. Krajewski, respectively (from "Educational Leadership"); and "On Models of Supervision in General and on Peer-Clinical Supervision in Particular," by John C. Thompson III. Bibliographic citations and ERIC accession numbers are provided for each entry. (TE)

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THE BEST OF ERIC ON EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

The Best of ERIC presents annotations of ERIC literature on important topics in educational management.

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Teacher Collegiality

1 **Ban, John R., and Soudah, John R.** "A New Model for Professionalizing Teacher Evaluation." *Peabody Journal of Education*, 56,1 (October 1978), pp. 24-32. EJ 198 719.

Most discussions of peer evaluation assume that this supervisory model will be implemented locally as an extension of existing evaluation programs. Proposing a radical departure from this line, Ban and Soudah here thrust teachers into the full light of professionalism. They propose, in short, that teacher evaluation be modeled after the peer-evaluation systems now in use in the medical and legal professions.

Currently, teachers are "appraised by non-teachers or educators whose main responsibility is not teaching." Teachers view these evaluators as outsiders or nonpeers, far removed from classroom reality. Moreover, "teachers see these people as fault-finders rather than assistants in the development of teaching strength." Peer evaluation, on the other hand, can generate the acceptance and cooperation that is now lacking, produce more rigorous monitoring of teacher performance, and help engender that elusive sense of professionalism teachers have long been groping for.

Ban and Soudah envision a regionally based evaluation system, encompassing three to five school systems with under 2,000 teachers total. Each region would have a "Central Repository" where the results of evaluations are maintained and stored, and a "Regional Coordinating Committee (RCC)" to run the system. The RCC would assign a peer evaluator to a particular teacher on an assigned date. Principals would be notified so the peer evaluator would be released on that date. The RCC would review the reports of peer evaluations and make recommendations for additional evaluations or remedial training, as appropriate. The RCC might also arrange to enlist superior teachers to help those teachers having problems.

Ban and Soudah go on to further detail the possible forms a regional peer-evaluation system could take. They discuss appeal procedures, composition and legal status of the RCC, the role of the state, and financing of the system.

2 **Brophy, Jere E.** *Using Observation to Improve Your Teaching*. Occasional Paper No. 21. East Lansing, Michigan: Institute for Research on Teaching, Michigan State University, April 1979. 18 pages. ED 173 339.

Several studies have shown that effective teachers plan and prepare their lessons carefully and are thorough and systematic in their presentation. Because these teachers are aware of what they are trying to accomplish and how they are intending to do it, they are able "to monitor their own progress more or less continuously."

In contrast to these "proactive" teachers, less effective teachers are "reactive"—that is, they spend much of their time "unsystematically reacting to unanticipated situations and student initiatives, seemingly without much conscious awareness of their behavior or its implications."

Brophy and his colleagues have found that many less effective teachers change inappropriate behavior readily if they are given simple feedback about those behaviors. Feedback can be provided by any observer, but peer observation seems to work best. "Working as a group," says Brophy, "teachers not only get useful feedback relevant to their individual interests, but begin to work together, sharing expertise and observations and breaking down the isolation that so often is a barrier to professional development."

Peer observation allows even teachers with wide differences in experience and expertise to learn from one another. Moreover, peer observation contributes to a sense of teacher professionalism and promotes the morale and effectiveness of the faculty group.

3 **Cruickshank, Donald R., and Applegate, Jane H.** "Reflective Teaching as a Strategy for Teacher Growth." *Educational Leadership*, 38, 7 (April 1981), pp. 553-554. EJ 245 690.

What would happen if teachers and students could take time out after each lesson to think about what had transpired, why it had happened the way it did, and ways that the teaching could have been improved? This is the question posed and answered here by Cruickshank and Applegate as they explain "Reflective Teaching"—a "carefully structured form of peer teaching."

Reflective Teaching requires a group of four to six teachers willing to teach in front of one another and provide honest feedback to their peers. Each time the group meets, one member is designated the teacher while the rest of the group becomes learners. The designated teacher gives a fifteen minute lesson he or she has prepared earlier on a topic not usually a part of the school curriculum, such as making origami.

Following the lesson, group reflection on the teaching occurs. "Here teachers discuss openly with their peers what the teaching and learning processes were like for them." Topics might include

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the difficulty of the content, the teacher's preparation of the lesson, how the learners felt about their accomplishment, how the teacher went about motivating the students to learn, and alternative teaching methods. In short, the whole teaching/learning process is open game during the reflection periods.

Reflective Teaching, the authors conclude, "gives teachers time to think carefully about their own teaching behaviors," gives them opportunities to view other experienced teachers in action, renews their self-esteem and interest in teaching, and points them in the direction of self-improvement.

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4 **Dornbusch, Sanford M., and others.** *The Collegial Evaluation Program: A Manual for the Professional Development of Teachers. Field Test Edition.* Palo Alto, California: Stanford Center for Research and Development in Teaching, Stanford Unviersity, 1976. 168 pages. ED 228 248.

In both theory and administrators' dreams, teacher evaluation helps produce better teaching. In practice, evaluation is more often a burden to be borne by both teachers and administrators than the growing process it should be. In this excellent manual, the authors systematically diagnose the ills of present evaluation practices and then propose a promising alternative—collegial evaluation. They outline in detail their six-step "Collegial Evaluation Program" that "leads to improved teaching by systematizing a way for teachers to get frequent, focused feedback from themselves, their students, and their colleagues."

To begin the program, administrators should hold a meeting for interested teachers at which the program is explained and partners are chosen. In step two, participating teachers obtain and compile student evaluations, using the included questionnaire and data sheets, if desired. The authors encourage teachers to expand and modify these already excellent instruments to fit their particular situations.

In step three, teacher pairs select the criteria they will use to guide their observations. This itself is a five-step process of identifying a pool of possible criteria, selecting and agreeing on criteria, checking the criteria for specificity and observability, and entering these criteria on the forms provided in the manual. Detailed discussions, instructions, and forms are provided.

In step four, teachers evaluate themselves using forms similar to those used for the student evaluations, and in step five the formal observation and conference cycle between teachers begins. Again, the authors provide a wealth of sensible advice, detailed instructions, and needed forms.

In step six, teachers draw up a plan for professional development based on the feedback received from students, colleagues, and selves. The central activity of this last step is a final conference between each teacher pair.

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5 **Ellis, Elmer C., and others.** "Peer Observation: A Means for Supervisory Acceptance." *Educational Leadership,* 36, 6 (March 1979), pp. 423-26. EJ 197 883.

Theoretically, classroom observations by principals and supervisors lead to improved teaching. In reality, according to studies conducted in the seventies and reported on here, teachers regard supervisors' observations as something akin to firedrills—necessary interruptions with little value for improving instruction.

Recognizing this "difference between teacher perception and supervisor hope," one of the authors—a principal—designed and implemented a new instructional improvement process based on the methods of clinical supervision and peer observation. After one year of using these methods, teachers' attitudes toward the value of supervisors' observations changed dramatically.

The principal began his program by explaining the clinical supervision cycle and how it would be used in the school. Next, peer observation teams were formed, such that "a teacher with a particular need was paired with two teachers who could offer assistance in that area."

Before the peer teams began their observations, the principal completed clinical observations with every teacher, giving feedback to each and explaining the cycle. Then the actual peer observations began with each team member observing the other two team members twice over a period of five months, again using the methods of clinical observation.

At the end of the year, many standard teacher attitudes toward observation had changed significantly. Teachers did not feel the need to change their usual style of teaching when an observer was present. They lost much of their fear about impending observations and felt at ease inviting fellow teachers into their classrooms to observe them. Finally, they felt that classroom observations by their peers were actually helping improve their teaching.

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6 **Grossnickle, Donald R., and Cutter, Thomas W.** "It Takes One to Know One—Advocating Colleagues as Evaluators." *NASSP Bulletin,* 68, 469 (February 1984), pp. 56-60. EJ 294 881.

Most teacher evaluation systems in use today are supervisor dominated. Administrators collect data, make judgments about instructional effectiveness, and report their decisions to the school board and to individual teachers.

Common weaknesses of this approach, say Grossnickle and Cutter, are that little or no attention is given to providing recommendations for improvement, too little time is spent on observation, infrequent administrator visits are "threatening" to teachers, and teachers often change their behavior when a supervisor is present. In addition, many teachers feel that administrators are not necessarily competent to perform evaluations, and most ad-

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ministrators have no training in observation and do little or no preparation before observation sessions.

To counter these weaknesses, the authors propose a system of peer or collegial evaluation, using another teacher as an evaluator. Such a system would provide more observational time and would promote the development of collegial relationships and teacher professionalism. Teachers are also more likely to "believe that fellow teachers have more expertise than administrators where teacher evaluation is involved" and thus would be more apt to heed any suggestions made.

Peer observation, like supervisor observation, requires time. The authors estimate that if four peer observations are made per year, each teacher will have to find fourteen extra hours—four for the observations, four each for pre- and post-conferences, and two for goal-setting and final conferences. Much of this time, Grossnickle and Cutter suggest, could be gained by having aides take over part of teachers' monitoring duties, thus freeing them for evaluations.

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7 **Helling, Barbara B.** *Looking for Good Teaching: A Guide to Peer Observation.* 1976. 11 pages. ED 186 380.

Peer observation can be a valuable technique for instructional improvement. But what specific behaviors should a classroom observer be looking for? This observation guide describes some 270 such behaviors drawn from 70 books and articles on effective teaching that are generally considered to be "good" teaching techniques.

The guide, says Helling, "provides information for the teacher which is *specific* so that he receives some concrete information, *selective* so that he gets some guidance as to appropriate directions for change, and *positive* so that he gets some encouragement." Classroom observers record examples of these behaviors they see displayed so that a teacher can "use his own best practice as the standard to work toward."

Teaching behaviors are divided into three broad classes—teaching through presentation, through involvement, and through questioning. Within each class the items are further divided into categories such as mechanics, scholarship, organization, preparation, and quality of interaction. For example, a section titled "classroom relationships" includes items such as "includes material relevant to existing student interests," "talks about why he does what he does in class," and "remembers and refers to student ideas."

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8 **Hopfengardner, Jerrold D., and Walker, Ronald.** "Collegial Support: An Alternative to Principal-Led Supervision of Instruction." *NASSP Bulletin,* 68,471 (April 1984), pp. 35-40. EJ 298 004.

The current "state of the art" in instructional improvement is characterized by unorganized and unfocused observation programs, teachers anxious about administrators' observations, and supervisors having unrealistically positive ideas about their effects on instructional improvement. This situation is exacerbated by the inability of many principals to act as true instructional leaders because of administrative demands, and by the increase in adversarial relationships between teachers and administrators.

All these factors "inhibit administrators' attempts to improve instruction," say the authors, and make clear that a new approach to instructional improvement is needed, one based on "internal, collegial support." A collegial support system can be defined as "a systematic process whereby administrators and teachers identified for their instructional leadership potential help the teaching staff develop effective teaching behaviors." Such a system is essential in today's schools because it "deemphasizes the superior-subordinate relationship and emphasizes a peer support network."

One approach to initiating a successful collegial support system is the authors' four-stage "Collegial Support Process Model." In stage one, the school leader identifies teachers with good human relations skills to supervise and act as master teachers. These teachers should be introduced to the literature on peer observation. In stage two, a forum is held in which staff members "evaluate the collegial support model and design a plan for its use." At this stage, the school leader must allow a transfer of power by adopting a supportive posture instead of a directive one.

In stage three—implementation—teachers are trained in observation techniques and collegial teams start operating. Finally, in stage four, the process is evaluated and improved. The authors include numerous references to other papers detailing peer observation models.

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9 **Lempesis, Christopher.** "Peer Observation Improves Teacher Performance." *NASSP Bulletin,* 68, 471 (April 1984), pp. 155-56. EJ 298 024.

Classroom observations and the feedback resulting from them are critical to instructional improvement. Even with no supervisor presence, teachers observing their peers can both learn and teach better instructional methods.

Just how, though, asks Lempesis, can administrators encourage peer observation? At Richland Northeast High School (Columbia, South Carolina), where Lempesis is assistant principal, the faculty was more than willing to try peer observation but lacked one critical ingredient—time. Teachers, understandably, were reluctant to give up their conference period, which was their only available time.

To ease this dilemma, administrators devoted a half-day inservice training session to the subject of peer observation. A guest speaker introduced and explained peer observation, and then videotapes of lessons were shown to teach observation techniques.

The teachers were then asked to observe three of their peers for at least twenty minutes each. After each session, observation forms were completed detailing the classroom environment, classroom management and instructional skills, and teacher-student relationships. Lempesis reports that some 90 percent of the faculty elected to participate in the peer observations.

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10 **McFaul, Shirley A., and Cooper, James M.** "Peer Clinical Supervision: Theory vs. Reality"; **Goldsberry, Lee F.** "Reality-Really? A Response to McFaul and Cooper"; **Krajewski, Robert J.** "No Wonder It Didn't Work! A Response to McFaul and Cooper." *Educational Leadership,* 41,7 (April 1984), pp. 4-9, 10-11, 11. EJ 299 423, EJ 299 424, and EJ 299 425.

Is peer clinical supervision an effective means of instructional improvement in urban schools? McFaul and Cooper's insightful article suggests that it is not, because the "needs" of the peer supervision model for collegiality and trust are incongruent with the prevailing isolation, fragmentation, and hierarchical power structure found in urban schools. Goldsberry and Krajewski, in separate following articles, challenge this conclusion and question the research on which it was based.

McFaul and Cooper studied twelve teachers from an urban elementary school who were enrolled in a one-semester graduate course on clinical supervision. The teachers were exposed to the rationale of clinical supervision and trained in its use; then they implemented eight cycles of the model in their school, four as a supervisor and four as a teacher. Videotapes were made of all sessions.

Despite this training, the teachers did not implement clinical supervision properly. Teachers tended to neglect the preobservation conferences due to harried schedules, to avoid substantive

analyses of their colleagues' classroom behaviors and thus finesse "uncomfortable" situations, and to jump prematurely to simplistic solutions for complex problems. The videotapes of conferences further called into question "teachers' *willingness* or *ability* to substantively analyze their peers' classroom behaviors."

McFaul and Cooper place the blame for the failure of this model on the incongruities of the model's assumptions with the realities of this urban school's context. In particular, the school's climate was characterized by "isolation and fragmentation, stratification, standardization, and reactionism."

Goldsberry opens his barrage of criticism by asking whether McFaul and Cooper's intervention, "and not clinical supervision, might be ill-designed for urban schools." The milieu of the school may well influence teacher behavior, but there is no evidence that it did in this experiment. "It seems at least equally likely that *the design and delivery of this particular intervention contributed the telling blow to its success.*" Peer clinical supervision may well be useful if implemented properly.

Krajewski takes much the same line in his critique. McFaul and Cooper's study presented "an unfair test of peer clinical supervision in that it was improperly introduced to the wrong audience without a positive existing support system. It didn't have a chance." Krajewski goes on to discuss the importance of administrative support for successful peer clinical observation programs and other prerequisites for success.

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11 **Thompson, John C., III.** *On Models of Supervision in General and on Peer-Clinical Supervision in Particular.* October 1979. 11 pages. ED 192 462.

Traditional approaches to teacher supervision have an irreproachable goal—to help teachers improve instruction. Unfortunately, though, these "older" approaches often don't work. According to research reported here by Thompson, "many teachers endorse the concept of supervision but vehemently oppose its practices."

The root of the problem, Thompson argues, is the rise of teacher professionalism, which dictates that teachers be given autonomy and power. This development, combined with a general need to reexamine present supervisory practices, makes it "essential that a new model of supervision be explicated." This new model must provide for participative decision-making, treat teachers as professionals, be feasible to implement, and be supported by research.

Thompson goes on to explain some of the more popular approaches to supervision today and judges them according to these criteria. "Clinical" supervision appears to work, but demands great quantities of administrators' time. "Collegial" or "collaborative" supervision, in which teachers form part of a supervisory team, suffers the same weakness. Moreover, both approaches are "supervisor-directed" and thus fail to provide the autonomy that teacher professionalism demands.

A promising model that does meet most of these criteria is peer supervision, which is essentially clinical supervision with a peer filling in for the supervisor. Thompson sees peer observation primarily as an adjunct to existing clinical supervision programs, not as a replacement. Peer supervision has not yet been critically examined by researchers, however, and Thompson encourages efforts in this direction.

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